

### Bulletin has new title and new look

The safety bulletin has been given a new title and a new look to signify a new era.

Very soon, the bulletin and other safety information will be available online at a Hospital Safety website.

You'll still receive the bulletin by email every month, but the current issue and past issues will be accessible on the website also.

### Safety Survey Due January 15

All employees are required to complete the employee safety survey by January 15, 2005. Employees can take the survey on NetLearning and turn the transcript in to their supervisors.

## Separating the Trash is Serious Business

Hospitals are required by law to separate hazardous waste from regular trash. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the state Department of Environmental Regulation, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) enforce the standards through scheduled and random inspections and fine those institutions found to be noncompliant.

The Hospital generally has at least one EPA inspection each year.

At UK Hospital, we think of waste as falling into five separate categories:

- Non-hazardous waste (regular trash)
- Bio-hazardous waste
- Sharps
- Chemical waste
- Radioactive waste

The last four types are considered hazardous waste.

For the most part, there are separate and specific disposal procedures for each type of trash. That means that Hospital employees must be able to identify which category an item falls into and then know how to dispose of it safely. The *Hospital Waste* chart, attached to this newsletter, will help you educate staff. It's important to remember, however, that segregating trash requires good judgment, as well as a resolve to follow directions, and that managers must monitor how waste is handled and disposed of in their areas.



### Current waste disposal practices not cost effective

In October 2004, the Hospital conducted a *waste audit*, a term that does not adequately describe the process involved. During an audit, every single bag of trash is opened and inspected.

The purpose: To determine *what* the Hospital is throwing away and *how* we're doing it.

In general, the 2004 audit revealed the following:

- Employees *do not*—as a matter of routine practice--throw medical waste in the regular trash. In 2004, however, Kentucky OSHA did inspect the hospital as a result of an employee complaint regarding improper disposal of medical waste.

## Hazardous Materials Resources

### Videos

- Hazard Communication in the Work Place
- Hazardous Chemicals: Handle with Care
- Read that Label
- Hazard Communication for Healthcare
- Hazard Communication: How to Protect Yourself (Spanish)
- Chemical Spills
- Safe Handling of Gases

### Brochures

- About Hazard Communication
- About Hazardous Materials in Healthcare Facilities

### Chemical labels

Call Shaunescia at 3-6023 to obtain videos, brochures, or chemical labels.

### Campus Websites

- Environmental Management  
<http://ehs.uky.edu/em/>
- Radiation Safety  
<http://ehs.uky.edu/radiation/>

## Separating Trash

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- Employees *do* throw a lot of regular trash into red bags.
  - The Hospital disposes of approximately 830,500 lbs. of red bag waste annually.
  - Of that 830,500 lbs., approximately 367,920 lbs. is really non-hazardous waste or regular trash—paper, PPE, drapes, IV tubing, and bandages that are not saturated or caked with blood or body fluids, and solidified/sanitized suction canisters.
  - The 367,920 lbs. of regular trash that is placed in red bags costs the Hospital approximately \$66,225.00 a year.
- Employees do not throw a lot of linen away, but surgical areas did throw away approximately 20,000 lbs. of blue surgical towels last year. Those blue towels could have been washed and reused by Environmental Services.
- Employees do a fairly good job of separating sharps from other forms of waste. The auditors found no sharps in red or regular trash bags. Unfortunately, seven hospital employees sustained sharps injuries while handling the trash in 2004—a fact that emphasizes that a “fairly good job” is not good enough.
- Employees generally separate chemical and radioactive waste from other kinds of trash. The auditors found no chemical or radioactive waste mixed with other kinds of trash. The Hospital has a radiation alarm system that signals workers if a trash buggy contains radioactive waste. The Hospital had 6 radiation alarms last year.

## Employees Who Handle Hazardous Materials Must be Trained

All hospital employees have the potential to come in contact with hazardous materials. For this reason, all employees participate in general hazard communication education as a part of Hospital Orientation.

This education is very basic. It is designed to make them aware of the types of hazardous materials found in a hospital setting and to inform them that they must receive additional training if they will use hazardous materials in the course of their work.

From there, it's up to the department to ensure that employees are thoroughly trained *before* they begin any assignment that involves hazardous materials.

Employees who work routinely with chemicals and other hazardous materials must receive additional education and training, appropriate to their jobs and level of risk.

To begin with, that means that almost every service area must have a

## Disposing of Hazardous Chemical Waste

- Label all accumulating chemical waste containers with the words HAZARDOUS WASTE.
- Affix a list of specific chemical constituents to the container.
- Keep containers closed except when filling.
- When the container is full, fill out a waste ticket for each container. You can obtain waste tickets from Hospital Safety of campus Environmental Management.
- Call Environmental Management, 3-6280, to arrange pick up.

## Hazardous Materials Training

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hazardous materials education and training program that includes:

- A list of specific chemicals or other hazardous materials that the employee will use or come in contact with.
- Information about the specific health and safety hazardous of each chemical.
- Information about safety handling and methods the employee must use to decrease the risk associated with the product.
- Procedures for safe disposal of the product.
- Procedures for spill management and clean up.

Some hospital employees will require additional, specialized training, outlined below. Remember, the employee must attend appropriate training before beginning related activities.

Subject	Type of Employee	Training Provider
Hazardous Waste	Laboratory and other employees who generate or handle hazardous waste.	Environmental Management
Radiation Hazards Recognition	Employees who work in a area in which radioactive materials are used or stored	Radiation Safety
Radiation Safety (Basic)	Employees who work with radiation and have no previous experience	Radiation Safety
Radiation Safety (Advanced)	Employees who work with radiation	Radiation Safety
Shipping Dangerous Goods	Employees who prepare dangerous goods for shipment	Environmental Management
Asbestos Awareness	Environmental Services and PPD employees	Environmental Management
Hazmat/WMD Awareness	Employees who may be the first to notice a hazardous materials or WMD event	Hospital Safety
Hospital First Receivers (Operations Level)	Employees who will serve on the decontamination team or assist in response to a hazardous materials incident.	Emergency Department or Hospital Safety